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Amongst other reading, I am going through Henry Bamford Parkes' History of Mexico. The tale of the Spanish Conquest of Mexico (and Peru as well) surpasses all the blood and thunder of fiction. It left a trail of bitterness behind, typified in many of Rivera's murals.

The disparity between riches and poverty in Mexico City is striking, but nowhere here have I seen slums as bad as those in the Negro quarters of Washington. Everyone who can afford it--and many who cannot--owns a flashy new American car. The old cars are said to have a ready sale in the country districts. Flowers are indescribably beautiful. Each day the management sends to our room a bowl of gardenias. In front of the Italian Embassy last night, an Indian vendor had an enormous basket of gardenias and orchids for sale at a few cents apiece. When we went to Xochimilcho, the array of nosegays, little baskets and bouquets of flowers was astonishing. Motoring to Cuernavaca, one passes acres of carnations. Even the lava produces luxuriant blooms. Despite the marshy character of the land in Mexico City there is a riot of skyscrapers abuilding. They, and older edifices, tilt like the Tower of Pisa, but no disaster has ever taken place. The costs of building are low because of the derisory rate of wages as compared with our own. The same applies to domestic servants who are abundant. One Mexican told me that his wage bill for eight servants (whom he clothes, feeds and lodges in addition) was 125 dollars a month. It is perhaps the low wages that accounts for the universality of high brick or stucco walls around residences.

Tonight, we went to a party at the Foreign Office given by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Señor de Tello, and his wife. There were about 1,000 people invited, and it was [illegible]. Afterwards [illegible] (John and I

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